

## **Rep. John Lewis Statement at the Funeral of Vivian Malone Jones**

It is stated in the gospel of Matthew chapter 5 verses 14 through 16, “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill may be seen by all. And a burning light is not put under a basket, but placed on a candlestick, so that its rays may shine on all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

Vivian Malone Jones was a light. She had the ability and the capacity to make a way for others. She made a way for those who had only seen her from a distance, and she made a way for those whom she would never meet. Vivian Malone Jones was a way-shower; she was a leader. Vivian Malone Jones was a light.

If she had been born on another continent, or in another country, maybe, just maybe she would have been a queen, a prime minister, or a princess. There was something magnificent about her being, something royal about her presence. There was something about Vivian Malone Jones that stood above all the rest.

She was a beautiful woman, a beautiful person, just beautiful to the core, and she allowed the spirit of history to use her good works for the cause of justice. When she walked through the doors of the University of Alabama on June 11, 1963, she carried the hopes, the dreams, the aspirations, and the longings of millions of her fellow human beings with her who were yearning for a more fair, more free America.

Her courage, her dignity, her focus in the face of the most difficult opposition made us all proud. That one simple act helped spark a revolution—a revolution of values, a revolution of ideas. That one simple act helped change the course of history.

Vivian Malone Jones, I want to thank you for those of us who were sitting in, marching, and organizing to end the dark days of segregation and racial discrimination.

We give glory to God for your light, for your life, and for your lasting contribution to the cause of Civil Rights and human dignity in America and around the world.

For you—Michael and Monica—for her sisters and brothers and all the members of your family—I want you to know that Vivian Malone Jones will forever live in our hearts and in our thoughts. Without her, our lives will never be the same, but her legacy will live forever and ever.

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